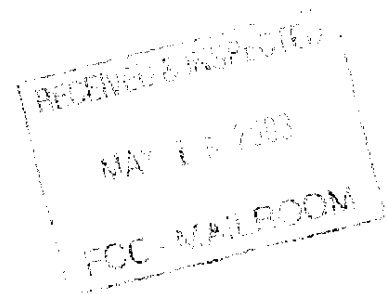


7

May 7, 2003



Dear Mr. Copps:

I am writing this letter to request you not relax the broadcast ownership rules that protect all American citizens from media monopolies.

The proposed changes would allow giant media conglomerates to gain near total control over radio and television contents and would provide a great disservice to all Americans across our country. Many of these corporations are now lobbying the FCC to relax the current ownership rules. These same corporations also have past track records in trying to keep opposing view points off the air ways.

All Americans deserve to hear all points of view on important issues, and make informed decisions on their own, and not be swayed by media bias. I urge you for the sake of democracy and the 1<sup>st</sup>. amendment to continue the broadcast ownership protections that helped to ensure healthy political debates in our great country.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gary R. Ball".

Gary R. Ball

Gary R. Ball  
315 North Shore Cir.  
Windsor, CO 80550

RECEIVED & INSPECTED  
MAY 15 2003  
FCC - MAILROOM

Michael K. Powell  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20554

May 2, 2003

Mr. Powell

Understand that normally I wouldn't take the time to write anyone voicing my concerns, however, now that I've been given the opportunity to do so with someone of your calibre, I would like to take a few moments of your time.

I'll be brief and to the point. Comcast's decision to remove the Baltimore channel line up from the available programs in Bowie is a disservice to the residents. For these reasons: minimal news coverage for this part of the county by any of the Washington area news media, the lack of sports coverage (Ravens, Orioles), lack of political coverage and just general overall coverage of our area news. I would like to express my request for reinstallation all of the channels that were removed.

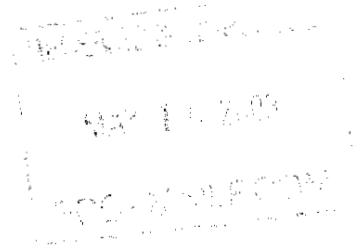
It think it necessary to remind Comcast that their services are here for the explicit reason of serving the public. I feel that we (the same public) are "forced" to accept programming that we would not otherwise choose and, consequently, forced to pay for such programming. Yet, at the same time, Comcast and Comcast only decides what programs we have access to. Since Comcast has (more or less) a monopoly, pricing and programming are its discretion. . . . so I guess, after all, it is a "sweet" way to do business.

The price we subscribers pay for the monopolistic service provided by Comcast is really quite high. And I do feel that we, the public, should have a say in what programs we are required to pay for. Short of having a "viable" alternative to Comcast (I don't consider DIRECT TV to be such, otherwise I'd just cancel Comcast and go with DIRECT TV and no need for any letter writing!) we really are left with nothing but writing to the powers-that-be, asking them to intercede for us where and when we deem necessary.

Sincerely,  
Joe Yonke  
13441 Overbrook Lane  
Bowie, MD 20715

314 S 8th St.  
La Crosse WI 54601

May 7 2003



Jonathan Adelstein, FCC Commissioner  
445 12th St. SW  
Washington DC 20554

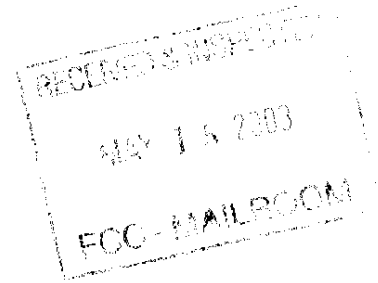
Dear Mr. Adelstein:

I oppose the plans to loosen media ownership rules. Government needs to regulate and represent the people in what is or is not broadcast. Small owners need an opportunity to broadcast issues that are different from the interests of large corporations.

Sincerely,  
Dorothy Piper

May 8, 2003

The Honorable Jonathan S. Adelstein, Commissioner  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554



Subject: Broadcast Ownership Rules

I wish to express my strong opposition to any relaxing of the broadcast ownership rules. Already giant media conglomerates seriously limit my ability to hear honest, complete and unbiased views of what constitutes 'news reporting'.

It doesn't seem an accident that when viewing or listening to ABC, CBS, NBC, or CNN 'news' one hears, with only rare exceptions, a singular (and politicized) viewpoint from each of them. The station ids are different, the reporter faces are different, the sets are different, but they all seem to be guided by the same editorial staff. (Well, yes, CNN is an absurdity and belongs in a class by itself.)

Too often one must glean through various TV and radio news programming, public service announcements, commercials and other programming to get 'the rest of the story' or hear of the deliberately excluded portions of a news event. And it's those excluded portions which can create totally different viewpoints than those presumably desired by the present media conglomerates' editorial staffs. I want nothing done which would further limit my access to more than one viewpoint or prevent me from hearing anything other than that which media conglomerates want me to hear, be it news, commercials, or other programming.

Maybe we should think the other way — that is, TIGHTEN the broadcast ownership rules.

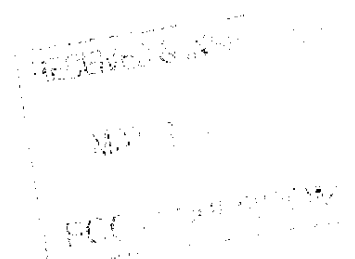
And one more thought: When the media deliberately or erroneously reports on an event, they should be required to present a total and honest correction. That correction should be made as often, and in the same setting, and, wherever possible, by the same individual(s) who erroneously reported the event.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Mr. Fritz".

Mr. David K. Fritz  
101 Wintergreen St.  
Michigan City, IN 46360-7438

May 8, 2003

The Honorable Michael J. Copps, Commissioner  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554



**Subject: Broadcast Ownership Rules**

I wish to express my strong opposition to any relaxing of the broadcast ownership rules. Already giant media conglomerates seriously limit my ability to hear honest, complete and unbiased views of what constitutes 'news reporting'.

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A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "DK Fritz".

Mr. David K. Fritz  
101 Wintergreen St.  
Michigan City, IN 46360-7438

**TED BECK**  
**117 E. GURLEY STREET, THIRD FLOOR**  
**PRESCOTT, ARIZONA 86301**

**(928) 445-6860**

**FAX: (928) 445-6488**

**E-MAIL: NONE**

May 8, 2003

The Honorable Michael K. Powell  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Broadcast Ownership Rules

Dear Chairman Powell:

The various news media organs already dominate much of America. Changing the Broadcast Ownership Rules in the manner being sought now by various large media interests would allow, indeed—would inevitably result in, monopoly power over radio and television news broadcasting.

The major networks and one or two of the cable news networks already have demonstrated their willingness, if not their eagerness, to squelch viewpoints differing from their own. Allowing further concentration of management power over news broadcasts (as well as opinion and advocacy disguised as "news") would directly threaten constitutional rights of speech, press, association, petition, and others.

I oppose the media-support rules changes.

Yours truly,

  
Thelton D. Beck

TDB/am

cc: The Honorable(s):  
Kathleen Q. Abernathy, Commissioner  
Jonathan S. Adelstein, Commissioner  
Michael J. Copps, Commissioner  
Kevin J. Martin, Commissioner

**TED BECK**  
**117 E. GURLEY STREET, THIRD FLOOR**  
**PRESCOTT, ARIZONA 86301**

**(928) 445-6860**

**FAX: (928) 445-6488**  
**E-MAIL: NONE**

May 8, 2003

The Honorable Michael K. Powell  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

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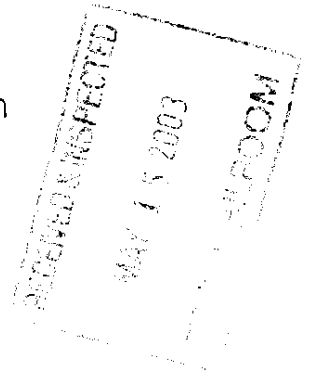
Yours truly,

  
Thelton D. Beck

TDB/am

cc: The Honorable(s):  
Kathleen Q. Abernathy, Commissioner  
Jonathan S. Adelstein, Commissioner  
Michael J. Copps, Commissioner  
Kevin J. Martin, Commissioner

James P. Lynch  
501 Tana Lane  
Joliet, IL, 60435-5321  
Tel. 815.725.5970  
Fax 815.725.9545  
email: jimlynch@attbi.com



May 8, 2003

Honorable Michael K. Powell, Chairman  
Honorable Kevin J. Martin, Commissioner  
Honorable Jonathan S. Adelstein, Commissioner  
Honorable Kathleen Q. Abernathy, Commissioner  
Honorable Michael J. Copps, Commissioner  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, D.C., 20554

Dear Commissioners:

Please do NOT relax broadcast ownership rules. I am concerned that such action would lead to near monopoly ownership of American media by a few big companies. This probably would then mean the near extinction of independent outlets of media sorts.

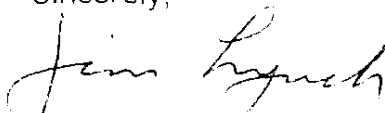
Big monopoly control of newspapers, TV, radio and news magazines would unfairly limit public access to information of all sorts. It would mean we would only hear or read the things that a very few people deem acceptable or which expresses their point of view at the exclusion of other perspectives.

In my mind it is effectively unconstitutional in that it would prevent the full exercise of our rights to free speech. While one could still express any opinion the circulation of that opinion and its potential for value would be greatly diminished.

Please keep all of us average citizens in mind in all your deliberations and act in our behalf rather in ways that would only benefit a few.

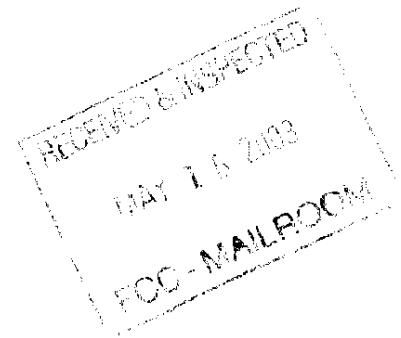
Thank you very much for your consideration of my viewpoint.

Sincerely,

  
Jim Lynch



1436 Woodward Ave.  
Lakewood, OH 44107  
May 08, 2003



The Honorable Michael J. Copps  
Commissioner  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commissioner Copps:

I urge you not to relax the broadcast ownership rules that protect American citizens from media monopolies.

These proposed changes would provide a way for large media conglomerates to gain *near-total control of radio and television news and information in communities across our nation*. Many of the corporations that are now lobbying the FCC to relax these ownership rules already have a known track record in attempting to keep opposing viewpoints off the air.

We deserve to hear and see more than one point of view on important issues. I urge you to continue the broadcast ownership protections that have helped to ensure a healthy *political debate in our country*.

Some of the problems I already see in the broadcast media are as follows:

- Entertainment and programming geared to the mentality of a 15 year old,
- "Breaking news" that has already been aired for one or more previous days,
- 10 or more continuous minutes of commercial advertising and less program content

*I think giant media conglomerates will only bring us more self-serving programming which adds profits to their bottom line and even less exposure to other points of view.*

Sincerely,

*Eric C. Leissa*  
Mr. Eric C. Leissa



Eric C. Leissa  
1436 Woodward Ave.  
Lakewood, OH 44107



Arthur Flint  
2795 Charles Bryan Rd., #206  
Bartlett, TN 38134  
May. 6, 2003

Honorable Michael K. Powell  
Commissioner  
Federal Communications System  
445 - 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Mr. Powell:

I urge you not to change the broadcast rules in any manner will permit any company to establish a monopoly in any part of the broadcast industry.

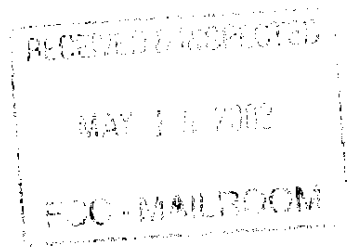
We know that any undesirable government immediately takes over the broadcast industry in their country. Letting any company establish a monopoly in the broadcast industry would create as undesirable a condition as government control of the broadcast industry.

Please protect the broadcast industry from becoming a monopoly.

Yours very truly

*Arthur Flint*

May 9, 2003



Honorable Kevin J. Martin  
Commissioner  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12 th Street , SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Mr. Martin :

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The American people deserve to hear more than one point of view on important issues. Therefore, for the sake of our democracy and our freedom, I urge you to continue the broadcast ownership protections that, for decades, have helped to ensure a healthy political debate in our country.

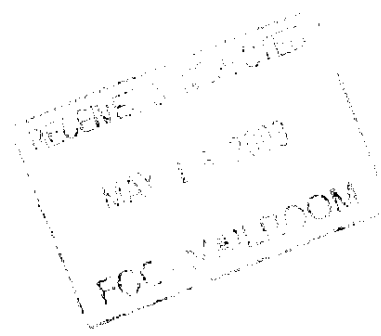
Sincerely Yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Don Sutton".

Mr. Donald W. Sutton  
511 Looking Glass Ave.  
Portland, Michigan 48875-1224

May 8, 2003

The Honorable Michael K. Powell, Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554



**Subject: Broadcast Ownership Rules**

I wish to express my strong opposition to any relaxing of the broadcast ownership rules. Already giant media conglomerates seriously limit my ability to hear honest, complete and unbiased views of what constitutes 'news reporting'.

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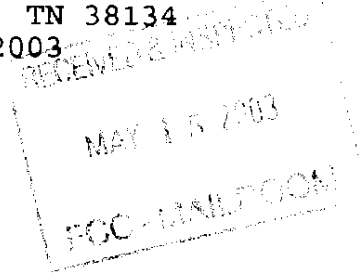
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Maybe we should think the other way — that is, **TIGHTEN** the broadcast ownership rules.

And one more thought: When the media deliberately or erroneously reports on an event, they should be required to present a total and honest correction. That correction should be made as often, and in the same setting, and, wherever possible, by the same individual(s) who erroneously reported the event.

  
Mr. David K. Fritz  
101 Wintergreen St.  
Michigan City, IN 46360-7438

Arthur Flint  
2795 Charles Bryan Rd., #206  
Bartlett, TN 38134  
May. 6, 2003



Honorable Michael J. Copps  
Commissioner  
Federal Communications System  
445 - 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

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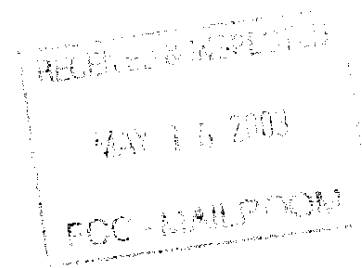
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*Arthur Flint*



May 9, 2003

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Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Mr. Powell:

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These proposed changes would pave the way for giant media conglomerates to gain near-total control of radio and television news and information communities across our nation. And many of the corporations that are now lobbying the FCC to relax these ownership rules already have a known track record in attempting to keep opposing viewpoints off the air.

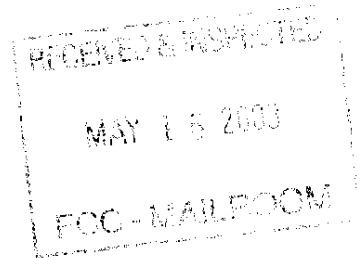
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Sincerely Yours,

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Mr. Donald W. Sutton  
511 Looking Glass Ave.  
Portland, Michigan 48875-1224

May 9, 2003



Honorable Michael J. Copps  
Commissioner  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

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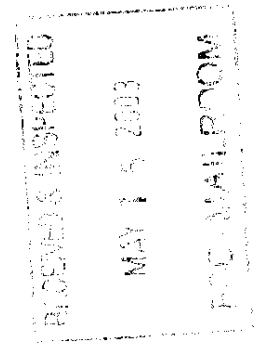
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James P. Lynch  
501 Tana Lane  
Joliet, IL, 60435-5321  
Tel. 815.725.5970  
Fax 815.725.9545  
email: jimlynch@attbi.com



May 8, 2003

Honorable Michael K. Powell, Chairman  
Honorable Kevin J. Martin, Commissioner  
Honorable Jonathan S. Adelstein, Commissioner  
Honorable Kathleen Q. Abernathy, Commissioner  
Honorable Michael J. Copps, Commissioner  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, D.C., 20554

Dear Commissioners,

Please do NOT relax broadcast ownership rules. I am concerned that such action would lead to near monopoly ownership of American media by a few big companies. This probably would then mean the near extinction of independent outlets of media sorts.

Big monopoly control of newspapers, TV, radio and news magazines would unfairly limit public access to information of all sorts. It would mean we would only hear or read the things that a very few people deem acceptable or which expresses their point of view at the exclusion of other perspectives.

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Please keep all of us average citizens in mind in all your deliberations and act in our behalf rather in ways that would only benefit a few.

Thank you very much for your consideration of my viewpoint.

Sincerely,

Jim Lynch



May 5, 2003

REQUEST FOR COMMENT  
MAY 15 2003  
FCC - BUREAU

Dear Mr. Martin,

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These proposed changes would pave the way for giant media conglomerates to gain near-total control of radio and television news and information in communities across our nation. And many of the corporations that are now lobbying the FCC to relax these ownership rules already have a known track record in attempting to keep opposing viewpoints off the air.

The American people deserve to hear more than one point of view on important issues. Therefore, for the sake of our democracy and our freedom, I urge you to continue the broadcast ownership protections that, for decades, have helped to ensure a healthy political debate in our country.

Sincerely,

*Susan Leidich*

Susan Leidich

360 Railroad Ave

Boxceville, WI 54725

Ed & Barb Wood  
8817 Burr Oak Road  
Roscoe, Illinois 61073-7867  
Phone 815-623-2648  
E-Mail edbarbwood@aol.com

Friday, May 09, 2003

The Honorable Michael J. Copps  
Commissioner  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Mr. Copps,  
Barbara and I urge you not to relax the broadcast ownership rules that protect American citizens from media monopolies.

These proposed changes would pave the way for giant media conglomerates to gain near-control of radio and television news and information in communities across our nation. Many of the corporations that are now lobbying the FCC to relax these ownership rules already have a known track record in attempting to keep opposing viewpoints off the air.

The American people deserve to hear more than one point of view on important issues. Therefore, for the sake of our democracy and our freedom, we urge you to *continue* the broadcast ownership protections, that for decades, have helped to ensure a healthy political debate in our country.

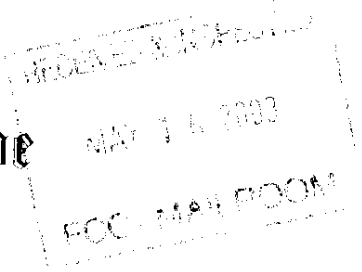
Sincerely,

Edward J. Wood  
Barbara K. Wood

Ed & Barb Wood

Davis Q. & Joyce F. McBride

1075 South 1200 East  
Clearfield, Utah 84015  
1-(801) 773-1415



9 May 2003

The Honorable Kathleen Q. Abernathy  
Commissioner  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

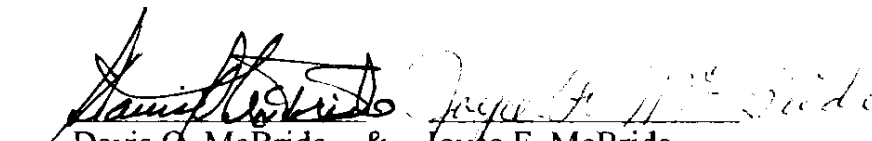
Dear Ms. Abernathy:

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The American people deserve to hear more than one point of view on important issues. Therefore, for the sake of our democracy and our freedom, We urge you to continue the broadcast ownership protections that, for decades, have helped to ensure a healthy, political debate in our country.

Sincerely,

  
Davis Q. McBride & Joyce F. McBride  
Clearfield, Utah 84015-1327

Ed & Barb Wood  
8817 Burr Oak Road  
Roscoe, Illinois 61073-7867  
Phone 815-623-2648  
E-Mail edbarbwood@aol.com

Friday, May 09, 2003

The Honorable Kevin J. Martin  
Commissioner  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

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Sincerely,

Edward J. Wood  
Barbara K. Wood

Ed & Barb Wood

PHILLIP VON STEPHENS, RHU

GENERAL AGENT

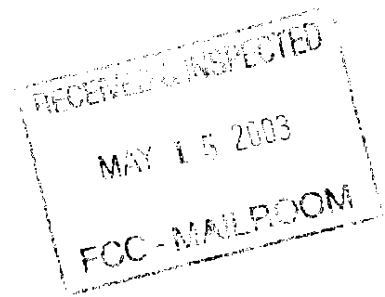
4911 MONTROSE BLVD.

HOUSTON, TEXAS 77006-6530

(713) 723-2009

Friday, May 09, 2003

Honorable Kathleen Q. Abernathy  
Commissioner of FCC  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554



Dear Madam:

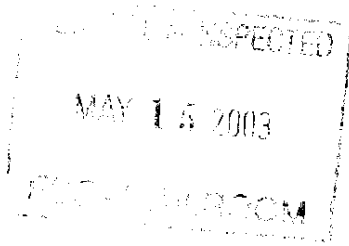
We have been reading of proposed changes that would pave the way for giant media conglomerates to gain near total control of radio and television news and information in our communities across America.

We urge you not to relax the broadcast ownership rules that protect the American citizen from media monopolies. Many of the corporations that are now lobbying the FCC to relax these ownership rules already have a known track record in attempting to keep opposing viewpoints off the air.

The American people deserve to hear all points of views on important issues. Only then can we be truly informed citizens. In the name of freedom and for the sake of our democracy we urge you to continue the broadcast ownership protections that have helped to insure a healthy political debate in our country.

As always we wish you well,

PHILLIP von STEPHENS



David Bohn  
P.O. Box 17965  
Honolulu, HI 96817-0965

Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

RE: Docket No. 02-277 Don't abandon media safeguards!

Dear FCC Commissioners,

I strongly urge that the FCC abandon its plan to end long-standing and critical safeguards that have served as an important "check and balance" system to help ensure diversity of media ownership. Under the proposal you are considering, one company in a community will be able to own the newspaper, several TV and radio stations, the cable system, and the principal Internet access company. There will be fewer owners of networks, stations, and newspapers nationwide. This will very badly damage true media diversity and competition. A competitive and diverse media is absolutely essential to ensure an informed citizenry and a healthy and vibrant democracy.

Eliminating these last remaining protections of the public trust would constitute a complete abandonment of the FCC's mission to ensure that our airwaves, which are owned by all Americans, are used in a manner which ensures the diverse range of voices and opinions needed in a healthy democracy. Loss of these protections would constitute a huge and unacceptable giveaway of public resources and political power to a few large and powerful media companies.

Further consolidation of the media in the false name of "deregulation" must be halted and in fact reversed. TV and radio news in the hands of a handful of profit-driven corporations has undermined our democracy more than any other modern force except the high cost of broadcast commercials during elections. The media companies have failed in their public trust to provide crucial unbiased information to the public about most public issues. Americans depend upon the media to bring us information that will allow us to make the informed choices necessary for the well-being of our nation and our future.

As an American concerned about our democracy, I urge you to reject the current proposal to abandon the last remaining controls on media consolidation. Instead, I strongly urge you to break up the media conglomerates, to open the spectrum to a wide diversity of organizations and independent journalists, and to reinstate the Fairness Doctrine.

Most sincerely,  
*David Bohn*  
David Bohn  
May 9, 2003

## NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

11250 Waples Mill Road • Fairfax, Virginia 22030 • www.NRAHQ.org

WAYNE LAPIERRE  
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

# URGENT NRA BULLETIN

## MEDIA MONOPOLY ALERT

RECEIVED &amp; INSPECTED

MAY 15 2003

FCC - MAIL ROOM

Mr. Kenneth Hall  
222 Valley View Dr.  
Cuba, MO 65453-8604

Dear Mr. Hall:

Please read this important NRA BULLETIN then take a few minutes to mail the five special postcards I've enclosed.

And please, DO THIS TODAY for the sake of your Second Amendment rights.

Right now as you read this message, major anti-gun media corporations are putting intense pressure on the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to make sweeping changes in the FCC rules that prohibit monopoly ownership of media sources in your community and across the United States.

The FCC has asked for public comment on these proposed changes and if they don't hear from us only the Big Media's voice will be heard.

The rules under debate -- known as "Broadcast Ownership Rules" -- have for decades prevented the giant media conglomerates from gaining monopoly control over what your fellow Americans can read in their newspapers, see on T.V., and hear on the radio.

And they have prevented gun-hating media giants like AOL Time Warner, Viacom/CBS and Disney/ABC from silencing your NRA when we've needed to take our message directly to the American people in critical legislative and political battles.

Now, however, the nation's most powerful media companies are trying to force the FCC to do away with these rules and pave the way for a tiny handful of corporations to gain total control over the news and information that Americans are allowed to read, see, and hear.

**If that happens, your NRA would face a disastrous situation where -- in a political crisis -- a small group of top media executives could literally silence your NRA and prevent us from communicating with your fellow Americans by refusing to sell us television, radio, or newspaper advertising at any price.**

Don't think it can't happen because it's already happened -- and I'll give you just one prominent example.

Back in 1992, when our heroic troops returned from Desert Storm, your NRA taped a

(over, please)

Please note

Thank you

- 2 -

special T.V. tribute, featuring Charlton Heston, to welcome them home.

This public service announcement didn't make a single mention of firearms or the Second Amendment -- instead, it was a simple, heartfelt message to our brave men and women in uniform, thanking them for a job well done.

**But we couldn't get it on the air -- at any price. All three networks said the same thing... that our "thank you" message to America's Armed Forces was "too controversial" because it was produced and paid for by the NRA!!!**

This is just one instance out of many in the past decade when the top brass of the major media conglomerates have denied your NRA's right to be heard. And now, these same networks -- and the executives who control them -- are trying to convince the FCC to relax its ownership rules so that they can vastly expand their control of our nation's media outlets...

...Including local newspapers, T.V. stations, radio stations, and cable companies...

...So that they can take an even greater hand in deciding what news stories and commercial messages are "fit" for the American people and which messages should be banned from the newspapers as well as the T.V. and radio airwaves.

If these rules are changed, a single media company could lawfully own and control virtually every news outlet in a community or even a whole state or region of America.

And you better believe that if these Big Media executives get the control they want over America's radio and T.V. airwaves, it will be all but impossible for your NRA to fight our grassroots battles in the way that we have done so successfully in the past -- by putting our message on the air, telling your fellow citizens the truth, and getting them involved.

Instead, a half-dozen anti-gun zealots in the top echelons of the media industry will have the unchallenged power to keep us off the air and shut down your NRA's efforts to communicate with the American people -- our most powerful weapon for protecting your Second Amendment rights and the rights of future generations.

If they can grab near-total control of the networks, the cable companies, the newspapers, and the radio, they CAN and WILL win the next big gun control battle that takes place in Congress, whatever form that battle happens to take.

Remember, the anti-gun media executives who would dictate media programming under these proposed new rules are the same individuals who gave enormous contributions to the Clinton-Gore gun-ban machine -- and who continue to give their political dollars to rabid anti-gun extremists like U.S. Senators Charles Schumer, Hillary Clinton, and Dianne Feinstein.

They don't believe the Second Amendment means what it says. They don't believe that you and your family should have a right to own firearms.

And they've never hesitated to use their clout to further the agenda of the "Brady Center" (formerly Handgun Control, Inc.) and other gun-ban groups by giving them free airtime, putting

(next page, please)



By: James Clingman

NNPA Columnist

National Newspaper Publishers Association

Radio All Talk,

No Action?

FCC and T.V.

As we await the Federal Communication Commission public hearing on further deregulation within the radio and television industries, and what move chairman Michael Powell will make this time, I wonder what will happen to Black radio, specifically Black Talk Radio.

You may not know it, but there are only a few Black-owned radio stations that can be characterized as "talk" stations. One is here in Cincinnati, Ohio, WDBZ, "The Buzz," which carries our show, "Blackonomics," each week. Considering the dearth of Black talk radio throughout this country, what should we do, if anything, in light of the impending expansion of a playing field already filled with heavy hitting media giants?

In light of its stark resemblance to an oligopoly, where a handful of owners virtually control the airwaves, radio in general and talk radio specifically should be at the top of the list when it comes to empowering Black people. Sharing ideas and establishing relationships through which to build and leave an economic legacy for our children and their children, could be greatly enhanced via Black talk radio. The question is: Do we use it for that purpose?

As we assess the current landscape, we see one company that owns 1,200 radio stations, some of which are piping in music 24/7 to Black youth. We have other conglomerates saturating the airwaves with White talk show hosts who could condense all of their shows to one because they all say the same things. You know what I mean, the political rhetoric abounds throughout the day; it's like the hosts all read the same notes and rehearse their lines together. You know exactly what you are going to get from them, but then again, who's in control of the media?

As far as Black talk radio is concerned, we do get a variety of opinions. But unlike the rallying cries I hear on those "other" stations, calls to action against events or persons that rub the host the wrong way, or calls for collective political action against an "enemy," much of our Black radio talk is just talk—without action. I don't mean to use a broad brush with that statement; I only want to sound the alarm.

The next round of deregulation could mean an even further decline in Black ownership of radio outlets and, more importantly, a decline in Black talk radio. I contend that Black folks do not have the luxury to squander a significant portion of our precious airtime dealing with ridiculous and petty issues. Sure, we need a laugh every now and then; sure, we need escapes from reality ever so often; sure, some of us could even use a little idle gossip here and there. But while others are busy capturing the minds of our children, and many of our adults by gobbling up as many radio stations as possible, we are on Black radio often complaining about what someone said on a White-owned station or even worse, castigating one another.

Ownership and control of income-producing assets are keys to the economic growth of a people. In addition, ownership of communication outlets, vehicles through which messages are transmitted that affect what we think and how we act, are of primary impor-

ance. Why would anyone want 1,200 of them if they were not important, not only as moneymakers but as programming tools. In a war, the first thing you do is cut the communication lines of the enemy. Black lines of communication are not being cut as much as they are being bought and controlled, but the results are the same.

Brothers and sisters, we have many hours of Black talk available to us across this country, although not necessarily transmitted via Black-owned stations. Nonetheless, don't you think we should use what we have to create positive action among people, when it comes to economic empowerment? Don't you think we should be paying more attention to the FCC, Michael Powell and the upcoming public hearing that is, incidentally, not covered very much in the dominant media. (I wonder why?)

Don't you think we should make more forays into the communications arena, especially Black talk radio, and turn it into a positive movement for Black folks? Other groups have done it. Why not us? Other groups are not afraid to speak on behalf of their people. They make no apologies for it, and if you call some of their radio talk shows they will tell you where you can take your opinion. Simply put, they have an agenda; they work everyday to maintain the power status quo.

Don't you think we could use more action to go along with all our talk? Airtime is precious, and the capability of speaking to thousands of our people via a Black talk radio program should, at every opportunity, call for and move our people to responsive action.

The next time you call in to your favorite show, try to say something that will stimulate Black folks to act on the basic principles of economic empowerment. Let's turn Black talk radio into Black action radio.

James E. Clingman, an adjunct professor at the University of Cincinnati's African-American Studies department, is former editor of the Cincinnati Herald Newspaper and founder of the Greater Cincinnati African American Chamber of Commerce. He hosts the radio program, "Blackonomics," and is the author of the book, "Economic Empowerment or Economic Enslavement—We have a Choice." He can be reached at (513) 489-4132, or by e-mail at [jclingman@blackonomics.com](mailto:jclingman@blackonomics.com).

Guest Editorial by

Children's needs . . . Ignored

# Returning continued from front

the wake-up call as to what was really going on in this country," Ball says. "My first week on board the ship, our supervising officer, who was a White man from Georgia, told us that he didn't like Black people but wouldn't use his rank to abuse us."

Ball says he was shocked that none of the other Black officers called the White officer out on his racist remark.

"That was my first week and I was shocked to hear that come out of a supervising officer's mouth, but it wasn't the last either," he says.

Ball says it was common to see Klan lettering on the bathroom walls on the ship and some officers passed out Klan literature as well.

"I also remember a time when they showed the movie, 'Mississippi Burning,' on board and a riot almost broke out because one of the soldiers snickered during the lynching scene," he says.

Ball says that the soldiers who are fighting in Iraq now will receive the same warm welcome he got when he returned home from the gulf.

"This group of soldiers will definitely be received well, with all the television coverage of the war that we

have seen and images of wounded soldiers, like Jessica Lynch, being made heroes," he says. "With Desert Storm there was a clear and defined end and there was a massive exodus of troops returning home. I don't know if that will be the case here."

Veterans from the Vietnam era have a different view.

Marion Stringer, a green beret, remembers when he first returned from Vietnam to find that although the signs of racism had been removed from view, the mentality still remained.

"My family owns a funeral home in Clarksdale, Miss., and to come home and to see the local sheriff address my father by his first name—that stung," Stringer says.

But he says he didn't feel betrayed.

"I have nothing but respect for my country, and I don't feel any anger towards my country. If I felt betrayed by anyone it was by certain people who hadn't bothered to change the way they thought," Stringer says.

Samuel Mayfield, an Army parachute rigger in Vietnam, shared Stringer's sentiments.

"I felt like I had served my country in vain, be-

cause as soon as we left and came back home, the Vietnamese took over anyway," says Mayfield, originally from Wise, N.C.

"But I didn't feel betrayed once I returned back home though. I felt like I did what I was supposed to and I don't feel bad about serving my country."

Stringer says that he returned a much stronger person than he was before he left.

"Combat hardens you and makes you speak up," he says. "You learn to just turn inward and you learn to handle pressures a lot better. Being able to do that helped me deal with what I faced when I came back."

He added that serving in Vietnam enabled him to take more from the racists he encountered in his hometown. He credits his religious upbringing with also helping him cope.

Stringer says that coming back to the states and not being welcomed also left him hurt.

"I remember going through Travis Air Force base right outside of San Francisco on my way back home and some guy spit on me and screamed that I was a baby killer," he says. "I didn't expect anybody to treat me like a hero when I came back, but I didn't expect to get spit on either."

Venus Hammack, a 24-

year veteran, received all the training she would need before she ever saw Vietnam. The Queens, N.Y., native's father was a decorated soldier in World War II and had encouraged her to join the armed forces after her dreams of becoming a singer were dashed after a bus accident left her vocal cords damaged.

"He told me that the Army would teach me a skill, so I joined right after my first year at college," she says.

Hammack joined at a time when there were no opportunities for women in the armed forces.

"Women at that time weren't allowed to have weapon training and they told us that we wouldn't even be near battle," she says.

Black women weren't chosen for high-ranking offices, most of which went to White men.

"I was placed in a mixed race unit of soldiers when I first went to Vietnam and by this time I was already ranked and they treated us like we were brand-new soldiers," she says. "They watched our every move and would comment if we came back to quarters later than they thought we should have."

Unfortunately, race relations haven't improved much for the soldiers of today.

"I think that when the soldiers get back from fighting they will find that

things aren't really that different, and they will also find that the country they served will have a very strong memory and won't remember to help them," Hammack says.

Sims says that when people will embrace this war returning soldiers, there still be some traditions that are hard to break.

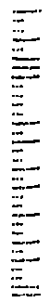
"I notice that after every war, more and more Black soldiers complain about the way they have been treated," says the Milwaukee native. "In Vietnam we were singled out and if we complained, we were labeled combative. I'm not sure if this is happening today, but the military hasn't really changed much."

Ball says that race relations can't just be improved in the military; they must be improved socially as well.

"There is no realistic way to deal with race while we are all in competition with each other for basic needs, like better jobs, getting home easier and things like that," he says. "Our society is in such a condition such that the rich get rich and the poor fight just to survive. We've got to address this as a society and then address dealing with race relations."

E. Kamen  
3610 Bell St. Fairfax  
Fairfax, Ky. 40134

Mr. Michael Powell  
Chairman FCC.  
445 12th St. S.W.  
Washington, D.C.  
20554



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